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The Epiſtle to the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of Friends in *England*, *Wales*, and Elſewhere.

From Our Yearly Meeting, *held in* London, *the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Days of the Fourth Month*, 1693.

Dear and truly beloved Friends and Brethren,

WE tenderly ſalute you in the Lord with Love unfeigned, heartily deſiring *Sion*'s Proſperity, and earneſtly praying for the Peace of *Jeruſalem* and of the whole *Iſrael* of God and Church of Chriſt, That all the Aſſemblies of Friends may be truly comforted, and abundantly refreſhed in the living ſence of his Preſence and unſpeakable Goodneſs of our God, as we have been beyond Expreſſion in this our ſolemn and ſeaſonable Aſſembly at this time, for which we are greatly obliged to bleſs and praiſe the God and Fountain of all our Mercies, and always to continue humbly thankful to him for the ſame.

The Principal Matters of moſt General concern agreed upon by this Meeting to be communicated, we do faithfully recommend to your Chriſtian Care and Notice as heretofore.

Reference to our laſt Yearly Meeting Epiſtle.

Our laſt Yearly Epiſtle being very comprehenſive and weighty, and more large than uſual, It is earneſtly deſired, that the Contents thereof be ſeriouſly Reminded in all your Monthly and Quarterly Meetings in order to the faithful performance, according to our Chriſtian Religion and Profeſſion in the purity thereof, and as God's faithful Witneſs in all Hearts doth enjoyn, and is ready to aſſiſt all the Faithful and diligent in the Conduct of their Converſations.

A ſummary of the former Years Epiſtle to be taken notice of by Friends.

And therefore that all due and Godly care be taken and exerciſed among all Friends in the Chriſtian and ſober Education of their Children and Youth, which are under their Care and Truſt, that they be good Examples and Patterns both in Converſation, Words, and Habits, becoming our holy Profeſſion and humble Religion of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, againſt the Pride of Life, againſt the Breach of Promiſe, Injuring and defrauding others in their Properties, Trade and Commerce, *&c.* againſt the grand Oppreſſion and Antichriſtian yoke of *Tythes*, that our Chriſtian Teſtimony born and greatly ſuffered for, be faithfully maintained againſt them in all reſpects; and againſt Steeple-houſe Rates or Lays; as alſo againſt the Burden and Impoſition of *Oathes*; and againſt all Whiſperings and Backbitings which tend to Strife and Diviſion, and making Parties; and all diſorderly and undue proceedings in Marriages, That Truth's Order, Method and Teſtimony be faithfully kept unto concerning all theſe matters, and the judgment thereof in God's Wiſdom, ſet over all perverſeneſs, unfaithfulneſs, and diſorderly walking, tending to the diſhonour of God, reproach and ſcandal of our holy Profeſſion, and of us his People.

The Record of Sufferings to be more carefully lookt after.

It is deſired, that *Friends* at all their Monthly and Quarterly Meetings be reminded to call for the Records of the Sufferings of Friends, to ſee that they be duly gathered, truly entred and kept, and accordingly ſent up, as hath been often adviſed, both of what Tythes, *&c.* are pretended to be due, and for how long a time, and the time when taken, and by, and for whom; and what Goods are taken, and the value thereof, as well of thoſe not exceeding, as thoſe exceeding the ſums or quantities demanded (it being a ſuffering in both for Truths ſake) they being in theſe particulars found defective and imperfect in divers Counties, which is *an Obſtruction* to the General Record of Friends Sufferings. And therefore the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings are adviſed to take more care for the future, that all Friends Sufferings for Truth's ſake may be brought up as full and compleat in all reſpects as poſſibly may be.

Of Ship-Maſters reputed *Quakers* carrying Guns in their Ships, the dangerous Conſequences thereof.

A complaint being made about ſome Ship-Maſters, who profeſs the Truth, and are eſteemed *Quakers*, their carrying Guns in their Ships, ſuppoſing thereby to defend and ſecure themſelves and their Ships, contrary to their former Principle and Practice, and to the endangering their own and others Lives thereby; alſo giving occaſion of more ſevere hardſhips and ſufferings to be inflicted on ſuch Friends as are preſt into Ships of War, who for Conſcience ſake cannot fight nor deſtroy mens Lives, 'tis therefore recommended to the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings whereunto ſuch Ship-Maſters belong, to deal with them in God's Wiſdom, and tender Love, to ſtir them up, *and awaken their Conſciences*, that they may ſeriouſly conſider how they injure their own Souls in ſo doing, and what occaſion they give to make the Truth and Friends to ſuffer by their declention, and acting contrary thereunto through Diſobedience and Unbelief, placeing their ſecurity in that which is

altogether insecure and Dangerous, which we are really sorry for, and sincerely desire their Recovery and safety, from Destruction, that their Faith and Confidence may be in the Arm and power of God.

Our Respect to Christ and Cæsar.

Dear Friends, you very well know our Christian Principle and Profession in this matter, both with respect to God and Cæsar, That because we are Subjects of Christ's Kingdom, which is not of this World, we cannot Fight, *Jo.* 18. 36. Yet, being Subjects of Cæsar's Kingdom, we pay our Taxes, Tribute, *&c.* according to the Example of Christ and his holy Apostles relating to Christ's Kingdom and *Cæsar*'s, wherein we are careful not to Offend, *Matt.* 17. 27. and 22, 20. *Rom.* 13. 6, 7. Being also very glad, and much satisfied in the many Testimonies given at this Meeting, of our Friends Innocency, quiet and peaceable Behaviour, under the outward Government, as becomes our Christian Principle and Profession.

Of *Tho. Wilson*'s and *James Dickinson*'s Travels.

Our dear Friends and Brethren, *Thomas Wilson* and *James Dickinson*, being by the good providence of God, preserved in their Travels, and safely returned, and present at this Meeting, gave account of their eminent Preservation and Deliverance both by Sea and Land, and of their Travils and Service in *Barbadoes*, East and West *Jarsey*, *Pensilvania*, *Maryland*, *Virginia*, *New-England*, *North-Carolina*, *Rhoad-Island*, *Long-Island*, *Antego*, *Nevis*; and that they found Friends in good Unity in most Parts, and great openness to Truth, and that in many parts, their great need of being Visited, and Friends there much desire it. And that in *New England* the cry of the Blood of Friends formerly put to Death there, is much revived, by the late Judgment and Confusion fallen upon the Professors there, about Witch-craft, several being there put to Death, under pretence of being Witches, which they wickedly accused Friends formerly with; insomuch, that some of the more Moderate People among them declared, that they believed, that the Hand of the Lord would not be taken from off that Place, until a day of Humiliation be appointed, to acknowledge and condemn that action, in putting the Quakers to Death. Which we pray God give them Repentance for.

Of four Epistles from *Ireland*.

Four Epistles from *Ireland*, one from the half Years Meeting in *Dublin*, another from *Ulster* Province, another from *Munster* Province; the fourth, from the Province-Meeting at *Lemster*; intimating the goodness of God in their Preservation and his Presence amongst them, and how well things are with respect to Unity, Peace and Concord among themselves; and withal, return their grateful acknowledgments of Friends dear Love; great Affection and Charity here towards them, for the Relief of poor Friends that greatly suffered by the late Calamities, which hath been to the great refreshment of the Bowels of many.

Of several Epistles from Foreign Parts.

Several other Epistles from Foreign Parts, as *Barbadoes*, *Maryland*, *Pensilvania*, *Virginia*, *Scotland*, *Holland*, were Read, signifying for the most part, the Love and Unity amongst Friends, and great Openness in divers parts, with desires of Friends Prayers for them, particularly in *Pensilvania*. And that in *Barbadoes* there hath been a very violent Distemper, which has caused a great Mortality.

Of the Earthquake in *Jamaica*.

A Letter also from *Jamaica*, signifying the sad effects of the late terrible Earthquake there, by the destruction of many with their Substance; two Thirds of the People (as is supposed) at *Port-Royal*, and the most of Friends then there lost, except those that were at a Monthly Meeting, twelve Miles distant from *Port-Royal*, who were by that means Preserved.

An Epistle from *Amsterdam* in *Holland*, signifying their Meetings are quiet, and that they are thankful to God for it, and desires to be Visited.

John Furley's Travels in *Holland*, &c.

And our dear Friend, *John Furley*, of *Colchester*, being newly returned out of *Holland*, and present at this Meeting, gave a full account, that he hath lately visited all the Meetings in *Holland* and Low-countrys in those Parts, except one little Meeting, which he could not get to, the place being much covered with Water. And that there is some Openness in some places, and great flocking of Strangers to the Meeting at *Amsterdam*.

Of *Dantzick* Friends.

An account was given of *Dantzick* Friends, that they have been quiet one Year and half, and so continue, tho but few left; some having died under Persecution—The Magistrates there now pretty kind——And that there are a People raised up and encreased in *Germany*, from among the **Lutherans**, called **Pietes**, and by some called **Quakers**, many whereof Persons of Learning and of the Gentry; That they are a People of sober Conversations; Persecuted by the Duke of *Saxony* and the Priests, but favoured and Tolerated by the Duke of *Brandenburgh*; several Friends Books at their request, have been spread among them: The *Priests* at *Hamburgh* much disturbed and inraged against our Friends and them, do rail and abuse them in Print, endeavouring to insense the Magistrates there by their Lyes and Calumnies, but the Magistrates do not gratifie them, but rather discountenance them; Blessed be the Lord, whose power is at work in the Hearts of many People.

Of a People called *Pietes*.

The

The Friends yet remaining Captives in *Maqueneſs*, are ſtill held under great Severities and Hardſhips, by that cruel tyranical Task-maſter, who is yet ſuffered cruelly to puniſh, wound and kill poor Captives at his pleaſure; and all poſſible care of their Redemption and Relief, is by this Meeting ſtill recommended to the Meeting for Sufferings, to continue their endeavours for the effecting thereof. Of the Captives in *Maqueneſs*.

This Meeting being acquainted that endeavours have been uſed for the relief of Friends in relation to Oaths, purſuant to the laſt Yearly Meetings Advice in that caſe, and what progreſs was made in the Houſe of Commons in order thereto, and before the Committee of *Parliament*, who after a due hearing of Friends, drew up a fair Report, and gave their opinion for our Relief, which nevertheleſs was loſt by Vote in the Houſe. Of Friends endeavours for Relief from Oaths.

This Meeting being ſenſible of the great care of the Meeeting for Sufferings here in that caſe, many tenderly acknowledged Friends labours and endeavours therein.

And the Meeting ſtill leaves it to the ſaid Meeting for Sufferings, to continue their care and endeavours in that caſe as the Lord ſhall pleaſe to make way for the general Eaſe of Friends.

An account being given to this Meeting, that ſeveral poor Friends have removed themſelves and their Families from divers parts of the Nation, to the City of *London*, who ſoon after their coming, being not capable to ſubſiſt, have applied themſelves to Friends there for Relief, and have been very chargable. About poor Friends Removal, &c.

It's adviſed, that if any poor Friends for the time to come ſhould incline to remove themſelves and Families to this City, that before they unſettle themſelves, they apply themſelves to the Monthly or Quarterly Meetings to which they belong, for Advice and Counſel; and that ſuch Meeting do rather advertiſe them to be contented in their Station, and places, where Proviſions, and Accomodations may be eaſier and much cheaper obtained then at *London*. Or if permitted by Certificate from the Counties to Remove, that then the monthly and quarterly Meetings from whence they come, do take care to ſupply their Neceſſities, that the Friends of *London* be not overcharged for the future.

Its deſired that the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings reſpectively take notice of all Friends Books, that are or may be ſent to them, according to former agreement, and take care for the diſperſing the ſame for the Service of Truth. Of Friends Books.

And alſo it is agreed that each Quarterly Meeting take care to adviſe the Correſpondants for the Counties, and any others concerned to Write Only to your Correſpondants in *London* about their Sufferings, and not to other perſons, leſt their ſuffering Caſe be delayed. Correſpondants only to be written to about Sufferings.

Friends appointed to view the Accounts Report, that they find they are truly ſtated and rightly kept. And Friends are again adviſed to bring up with them the total Sum of each Counties Collection for the Relief of Friends that ſuffered by the late Calamities in *Ireland*. Accounts.

We are truly comforted and greatly refreſhed in the Lord by the weighty Accounts given at this our ſolemn Aſſembly from the reſpective Counties in *England* and *Wales*, by the Friends ſent up, as alſo by ſome Epiſtles from ſeveral Counties, importing the Unity, Love, Peace and Concord among Friends, and Proſperity of the bleſſed Truth and increaſe of the Government of Chriſt, and his Peace in the Church, in which we pray God to keep his People to the end Accounts of Truth's Proſperity, &c.

To avoid Contention and Strife in all Meetings, It is the Advice and Sence of this Meeting,

1. That all Friends have a care of God's Glory, be tender thereof, as hath been often adviſed.

2. And to keep the Authority of your Meetings in the Power of God, and Unity of his bleſſed Spirit, whereby they were errected, and ſettled, and continue your Godly care and ſervices therein for theſe good ends for which they were firſt inſtituted. Seaſonable Advice for Peace & good Order in ſeveral particulars.

3. And to keep out all Contention, perſonal Reflections and Smitings out of your Meetings; and keep down and out of all Heats, and Paſſions, and doubtful Diſputations.

4. Suffer no turbulent contentious quarrelſom Spirit or Perſon to be concerned among you, in ordering your affairs, that they may be all managed in the peaceable tender Spirit and Wiſdom of Chriſt Jeſus.

5. Suffer no Diviſions, or Schiſms, or making parties among your ſelves one againſt another, for that will greatly tend to weaken your Meetings, and loſe their power, and to cauſe them and you to be ſlighted.

6. Both our Mens and Womens Meetings, and our Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, and Yearly Meetings, and Meetings for Sufferings were ſet up in the Wiſdom, Counſel, and tender Love of God, and in the ſame peaceable Wiſdom to be kept and incouraged for all thoſe good ends for which they were intended and appointed.

7. All

7. All Differences happening in Perſonal or Temporal occaſions to be ſpeedily ended (according to the Advice given in our laſt Yearly Epiſtle) and if any doubtful point in Law be in the caſe, then both parties may adviſe with ſome well knowing in the Law; For if any luſt to be contentious, we have no ſuch Cuſtom in the Churches of Chriſt.

8. The Meeting for Sufferings is intruſted to take care of all Sufferings of Friends for Truth and Conſcience ſake, as at firſt intended.

The ſix Friends of the City appointed and intruſted this Year with the Accounts, are *William Crouch*, *John Staploe*, *William Macket*, *William Chandler*, *William Beech*, and *Nathaniel Marks*.

The bleſſed Progreſs and Concluſion of the Meeting.

Our Souls alſo were very deeply affected with the refreſhing Preſence and Counſel of the Lord our God attending this our Yearly Meeting, and the Amicable and Peaceable Management of the Affairs, and the Bleſſed End and Cloſure thereof, to the great Conſolation and Satisfaction of Friends, and honour of his Bleſſed Truth, in which our Unity ſtands; bleſſed be the God of all our Mercies forever.

It's agreed that our Yearly Meeting be continued as hitherto, if the Lord will, being Adjourned till the next Year. And that Friends of each County ſend two Faithful Friends to attend the Service thereof as formerly directed.

Signed in behalf of our ſaid Meeting, by

Benjamin Bealing.

Tho: Story

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March. 11, 1927.